



News Release

Arizona Department of Public Safety

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Arizona Department of Public Safety Seizes Approximately 3650 Pounds of Marijuana from a Commercial Vehicle

On Friday late evening (early Saturday morning) around midnight on March 15, 2008, an Arizona Department of Public Safety Officer assigned to the Northern Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Bureau, conducted a traffic stop and inspection on a commercial vehicle and uncovered 3650 pounds of Marijuana. The stop was conducted on Interstate 17 northbound near Milepost 337, south of Flagstaff.

The commercial vehicle that was stopped is identified as a Kenworth conventional tractor pulling a refrigerated box trailer. There were two occupants (driver and one passenger) in the tractor. During the process of the commercial vehicle inspection, both occupants displayed indicators which were consistent with possible criminal activity. It was during the inspection of the trailer section that the Officer noticed the duffle bags stacked high in the rear, behind various produce packaging. A DPS Canine Officer was requested and the K-9 did alert to the area which provided the probable cause for the search of the vehicle. The search of the trailer section revealed approximately 37 duffle bags of marijuana with an estimated weight of 3650 pounds. The marijuana was wrapped in plastic bundles which were inside the duffle bags that were located behind the produce containers.

The produce consisted of various vegetables such as red and yellow peppers, cucumbers and egg plant. The produce load was picked up in Yuma, Arizona, and the destination was New York. The truck is owned by a company based in Indiana. Due to the furtherance of this investigation the name of the company is not being provided at this time.

The driver is identified as Gerald Hardy, age 40, resident of California. The passenger is identified as Bobby Bowens, age 26, resident of Indiana. Both were booked in the Coconino County Jail and charged with Possession of Marijuana and Possession of Marijuana for Transportation and Sale, which are Class 2 Felonies. Booking photos of the suspects will have to be obtained from the Coconino County Sheriff's Office. Photos of the marijuana and vehicle are provided with this release.

The produce will be turned over to the broker and allowed to be delivered to its New York destination. The marijuana and the commercial vehicle have been seized as evidence. This large drug seizure is still under investigation and therefore, there will be limits on the amount and type of information that can be additionally provided.

End









